

business community to review Federal tax implications to Guam's economy and determine whether or not to delink from the U.S. Tax Code. But the immediate issue before us is the impact of the anticipated tax plan.

Last week I wrote to Treasury Secretary O'Neill urging him that special consideration be given for Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. I simply want Members of Congress and the White House and Treasury Department officials to understand the implications for any tax cut proposal on the operations of the Government of Guam and the impact to our communities, and I hope that we can work something out.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: "I love you O Lord, my strength." David prays this with such great abandonment.

Often when we pray, O Lord, it is with routine and out of daily concerns. But when overwhelmed with distress and responsibilities, we sometimes approach David's depths and cry out that You be our strength.

In this age of information and as a powerful Nation, we can easily be caught up in our own agenda and see no further; foolish enough to think that we can accomplish great deeds on our own.

But without You we can do nothing; nothing of lasting value, nothing of true significance, nothing that will touch the people around us and move them deeply.

Help us now, O Lord, as a Nation and as this governing body.

Shield us from moments of crisis and distress. Instead, renew in us the love You evidence in our history. Allow us to be so overwhelmed by Your loving presence today, that with all our hearts we may pray:

"I love You, O Lord, my strength" now and forever. Amen

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. OSBORNE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

GOOD NEWS FOR AMERICA'S SENIORS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, today we have some good news for our Nation's senior citizens. Today we have the chance to make a promise to our seniors that Social Security and Medicare will be there for them when they need it. After all, it is only fair.

Americans pay into the Social Security and Medicare systems all of their lives; they deserve to know that their benefits will be there for them when they retire. The Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act will lock away \$2.9 trillion in Social Security and Medicare trust funds guaranteeing that these precious funds are not spent on wasteful, big government programs.

This lockbox legislation is good news and reiterates our commitment to ensuring retirement security for America's seniors, today and in the future.

I encourage all of my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to support this important legislation and make a real commitment to our seniors by protecting the future of Social Security and Medicare.

HEATING FUEL COSTS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, home heating fuel costs have doubled. The companies blame OPEC and the bitter winter. Now if that is not enough to insulate your BVDs, these same companies are now saying, and I quote, they are losing money. Beam me up.

I say it is time to impose a \$100 million fine on this bunch of bric-a-bracin, ratchet-fratchet nincompoops who have a license to steal and are stealing from our constituents.

I yield back all of the gas of the beer drinkers association as an in-kind contribution to all of these poor, unprofitable, crying energy companies.

ENERGY CRISIS AS IT AFFECTS AGRICULTURE

(Mr. OSBORNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about energy as it affects agriculture. Due to high fuel prices, the cost of running farm machinery has skyrocketed. In addition, natural gas is necessary to manufacture fertilizers such as anhydrous ammonia. As the planting season approaches, anhydrous ammonia is almost impossible to obtain and extremely expensive if it can be found at all. As a result, the troubled agriculture industry is under even greater stress today than it ever has been.

As with most crises, there is also an opportunity. At the present time, we have an excellent opportunity to double or even triple the production of alternative fuels like ethanol and soy diesel. If we do this, three benefits will occur:

One, we lessen our dependence on foreign oil, and this will be good for the country.

Number two, we will reduce undesirable fuel emissions, and this will be good for the environment.

Number three, we will utilize surplus crops in a profitable manner, and this will be good for agriculture.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE LOCKBOX LEGISLATION

(Mr. GRAVES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, for over 30 years, the Social Security and Medicare Part A trust funds have been used to distort the budget surplus numbers and mask deficits. This must not continue.

Today we have the opportunity to cast a vote that will end this shortsighted and fiscally irresponsible practice. Today we have the opportunity to lock away all surpluses in the Social Security and Medicare trust funds and ensure that these funds can only be spent to provide retirement and health care security for our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, the first step to saving Social Security and Medicare is to stop spending it on unrelated government programs. This is an essential first step to preserve and strengthen these programs for current and future retirees.

I urge my colleagues to send a clear message to all Americans and end the raid on Social Security and Medicare.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

(Mr. OTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2, the Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001. This measure guarantees that every penny paid into the Social Security and Medicare trust funds will be secure for the millions of seniors, including my 85-year-old mother in Nampa, Idaho, who rely on them today. It is also an important first step in shoring up the funds for young workers who will rely on them in the years to come.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is much more to do. And I look forward to working with the new administration and reforming Social Security to ensure that we keep our promise to those current beneficiaries and to those who are soon to retire, and just as importantly, to guarantee to those younger workers that they will get them when they reach their retirement age.

Mr. Speaker, we should also work to repeal the tax on senior citizens that was placed there by the last administration. H.R. 2 is a much-needed sign that the Federal government is keeping its commitment to senior citizens by creating a Social Security and Medicare Trust Lockbox to buttress these dollars against spending raids.

Our action today sends a strong message that saving Social Security and Medicare is a top priority of this Congress. The senior citizens that have contributed so much of their lives to our country deserve the comfort and the peace of mind that their country is there and will be there for them because they were there for us.

It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that we will move quickly to accept this legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

CONGRATULATING PRIME MINISTER-ELECT OF ISRAEL, ARIEL SHARON

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 34) congratulating the Prime Minister-elect of Israel, Ariel Sharon, calling for an end to violence in the Middle East, reaffirming the friendship between the Governments of

the United States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 34

Whereas the Governments of the United States and Israel are close allies and share a deep and abiding friendship based on a shared commitment to democratic values;

Whereas since its establishment in 1948, Israel has fulfilled the dreams of its founders, who envisioned a vigorous, open, and stable democracy;

Whereas the centerpiece of Israeli democracy is its system of competitive, free, and open elections;

Whereas on February 6, 2001, the people of Israel elected Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister of Israel; and

Whereas the election on February 6, 2001, is the most recent example of the commitment of Israel to the democratic ideals of freedom and pluralism, ideals that Israel shares with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates Ariel Sharon on his election as Prime Minister, and extends to him the best wishes of the people of the United States;

(2) commends the people of Israel for reaffirming, through their participation in the election on February 6, 2001, their dedication to democratic ideals;

(3) urges Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to use his influence and resources to see that violence in the Middle East is brought to an end;

(4) calls upon the countries that neighbor Israel and upon the international community to respect the freely expressed will of the people of Israel and to be prepared to engage in constructive relations with the new Government of Israel;

(5) reaffirms the close bonds of friendship that have bound the people of the United States and the people of Israel together through turbulent times for more than half a century; and

(6) restates the commitment of the United States to a secure peace for Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 34, the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 34, a measure which congratulates Prime Minister-elect, Ariel Sharon, of Israel, calls for an end to violence in the Middle East, and reaffirms the friendship between the United States and Israel.

I am pleased to have sponsors of this resolution on behalf of myself and the

gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking Democratic member of our Committee on International Relations; and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), one of our freshmen Members; the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia; and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), the ranking Democratic member of that subcommittee; as well as several other Members.

H. Res. 34 recalls the abiding alliance between Israel and the United States, which is grounded in our shared commitment to democratic values. In over 50 years of Israel's existence, it has stood as a beacon of democracy in a tension- and trouble-filled region.

On February 6, 2001, the citizens of Israel once again went to the polls to elect a Prime Minister in a competitive, free, and open election. That election was decisively won by Ariel Sharon. Accordingly, this legislation congratulates him on his election as Prime Minister and extends to him the best wishes of the people of the United States.

It also commends the people of Israel for reaffirming, through their participation in that election, their dedication to democratic ideals.

Mr. Speaker, the violence that has wracked Israel and the disputed territories for months is indeed deplorable. While H. Res. 34 urges Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to use his influence and resources to see that violence in the Middle East is brought to an end, the legislation also restates the U.S. commitment to a secure peace for Israel.

Our measure calls upon the countries that neighbor Israel and upon the international community to respect the freely expressed will of the people of Israel and to be prepared to engage in constructive relations with the new government of Israel.

The future will surely bring many new challenges to Israel, including the continued threat of terrorism and the added danger imposed by weapons of mass destruction. It is critical the United States and Israel maintain an unshakeable alliance to further our many mutual interests.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that the distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations and I, as the new ranking member, jointly bring before this body an important resolution. And as we do so, I want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for his work on this resolution; and I want to express the hope that we will be able to